

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 16, 2021

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20535

Mr. Joseph Maher
Senior Official Performing the Duties
of the Acting Under Secretary
Office of Intelligence and Analysis
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Steve Vanech
Acting Director
National Counterterrorism Center
Washington, D.C. 20511

The Honorable John Ratcliffe
Director of National Intelligence
Office of the Director of National Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Director Wray, Acting Director Vanech, Mr. Maher, and Director Ratcliffe:

The American people continue to learn disturbing details about the horrific insurrection at the U.S. Capitol and surrounding area on January 6, and the growing public record is still far from complete. The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (the “Committee” or “HPSCI”), the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Oversight and Reform (collectively, the “Committees”), in exercise of their legislative and oversight jurisdictions, are reviewing the events of January 6 and related threats against the Nation’s peaceful transition of power. The Committees will conduct robust oversight to understand what warning signs may have been missed, determine whether there were systemic failures, and consider how to best address countering domestic violent extremism, including remedying any gaps in legislation or policy.

As a first step, and as described in the annex to this letter, the Committees ask that your organizations produce relevant documents, and schedule briefings, regarding specific intelligence matters associated with the insurrection and threats to the U.S. presidential inauguration.

Security and logistical preparations before January 6 were not consistent with the prospect of serious and widespread violence. Yet, according to media accounts that have surfaced in recent days, federal and other authorities earlier on possessed — and may have shared with some parties — intelligence and other information forecasting a dire security threat against the

Congress's meeting to certify the election results.¹² These latter reports, if acted upon, might have prompted more extensive planning for the event, and the infusion of far greater security and other resources.

Tragically that did not happen. Emboldened by President Trump's inciteful rhetoric and his false claims of a stolen election — at the National Mall that day and for weeks before — a pack of violent insurrectionists forced their way into the Capitol complex with the intent to stop Congress from discharging its constitutional duties to certify the results of the presidential election. The mob caused extensive damage to persons and property. They assaulted woefully under-resourced U.S. Capitol Police officers and other security personnel, a great many of whom bravely resisted. They reportedly tried to steal one officer's gun, hoping to kill him with it, and injured another causing his death.³ They brought firearms, ammunition, explosives, tactical gear, and zip ties to detain potential victims.⁴ Some of them reportedly planned to take hostages and harm lawmakers. Among the riotous mob were suspected domestic violent extremists, including neo-Nazis, white supremacists, anti-government militia, and, most shockingly, current as well as former law enforcement officers and former military servicemembers.

This still-emerging story is one of astounding bravery by some U.S. Capitol Police and other officers; of staggering treachery by violent criminals; and of apparent and high-level failures — in particular, with respect to intelligence and security preparedness.

The Committees therefore request the records and briefings described in the annex attached hereto in pursuit of the following inquiries:

- What elements of the Intelligence Community ("IC") and federal law enforcement knew about threats of violence and destruction before, during, and after the insurrection; whether such information was shared with appropriate personnel and if so, how; whether any information was paused, delayed or withheld; and whether the insurrection had any nexus to foreign influence or misinformation efforts, and to what degree foreign powers have sought to exploit and aggravate the crisis;

¹ *FBI, NYPD told Capitol Police about possibility of violence before riot, senior officials say*, NBC News (Jan. 10, 2021) (online at <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/crime-courts/fbi-nypd-told-capitol-police-about-possibility-violence-riot-senior-n1253646>).

² *FBI report warned of 'war' at Capitol, contradicting claims there was no indication of looming violence*, The Washington Post (Jan. 12, 2021) (online at https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/capitol-riot-fbi-intelligence/2021/01/12/30d12748-546b-11eb-a817-e5e7f8a406d6_story.html).

³ *DC police officers speak out after US Capitol siege: 'I thought ... I might die'*, ABC News (Jan. 15, 2021) (online at <https://abcnews.go.com/US/dc-police-officers-speak-us-capitol-siege-thought/story?id=75270773>).

⁴ *Stun guns, 'stinger whips' and a crossbow: What police found on the Capitol protesters*, NBC News (Jan. 13, 2021) (online at <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/stun-guns-stinger-whips-crossbow-what-police-found-capitol-protesters-n1254127>).

- Whether any current or former holders of security clearances and/or of positions in U.S. national security, justice, defense or homeland security organizations participated in the insurrection; and
- The policy and other responses to the insurrection, to include any measures to identify, apprehend or prevent the travel of those who committed crimes, including any Domestic Violent Extremists.

The Committees expect and appreciate your full cooperation with this matter – while of course recognizing that resources appropriately and immediately must be allocated to efforts to counter any continuing threats to the transfer of power, including the presidential inauguration and related activities. The Committees stand ready to work with you to arrange for the requested production of documents and briefings.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Committee's Majority Staff at (202) 225-7690.

Sincerely,



Adam B. Schiff
Chairman
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence



Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security



Carolyn Maloney
Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform



Jerrold Nadler
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary

cc: The Honorable Devin Nunes
Ranking Member, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

The Honorable John Katko
Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable James Comer
Ranking Member, Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Jim Jordan
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary

ANNEX - INITIAL REQUESTS FOR DOCUMENTS AND BRIEFINGS

Documents

The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (the “Committee” or “HPSCI”) the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Oversight and Reform (collectively, the “Committees”) respectfully request that, consistent with the protection of sources and methods, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”), the Office of Intelligence and Analysis (“I&A”) and other appropriate components of the Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”), and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (“ODNI”) and its National Counterterrorism Center (“NCTC”) produce to the Committees, at the soonest opportunity but **by no later than 5 p.m. on February 15, 2021**:

- All intelligence – whether raw or finished – that refers or relates to events that could or ultimately did transpire on January 6, 2021, or refers or relates to threats in connection with the U.S. presidential inauguration, including all assessments, bulletins, notes, spot reports, situation reports, briefing materials for senior officials, or requests for assistance; and
- All documents or materials that refer or relate to events that could or ultimately did transpire on January 6, or refer or relate to threats in connection with the U.S. presidential inauguration.

Briefings

The Committees request briefings from your agencies as follows:

- **FBI, DHS I&A, NCTC and others as appropriate:**
 - A joint classified briefing to the Committees the week of January 22-26 regarding the extent of the Intelligence Community’s (“IC”) knowledge of a threat against the U.S. Capitol and surrounding area before, during, and after the January 6 attack; and/or in the days leading up to the U.S. Presidential inaugural. The briefing should address whether and how such information was shared with appropriate law enforcement and other counterparts; whether any was paused, delayed, or withheld; and whether the insurrection had any nexus to foreign influence or misinformation.
 - A joint classified briefing to HPSCI during the week of February 1-5 on how the Terrorism Screening Center (“TSC”) and National Vetting Center (NVC) apply screening and vetting to Domestic Violent Extremists (“DVEs”), including support from the Intelligence Community to such efforts.

- **FBI:**
 - A briefing to HPSCI during the week of February 1-5, in coordination with the National Counterintelligence and Security Center (“NCSC”) and any other applicable federal department or agency, on whether current or former holders of security clearances and/or of U.S. national security, justice, defense, or homeland security positions participated in violence or other criminal activity relative to the January 6 insurrection and attacks on the U.S. Capitol; and if so, any actions taken in response.
 - A briefing to the Committees during the week of February 1-5 to answer questions on specific concerns on the FBI’s intelligence, information sharing and response.
- **DHS I&A and other appropriate components of DHS:**
 - A briefing to the Committees during the week of February 15-19 on the threat posed by DVEs and targeted violence and prevention programs to counter DVEs.
- **NCTC:**
 - A briefing to HPSCI during the week of February 8-12 on how NCTC is supporting FBI and DHS on DVEs, including but not limited to the January 6 insurrection and any transnational links between DVEs and other extremists.
- **ODNI:**
 - A briefing to HPSCI during the week of February 8-12 on the efficacy of security clearance and background investigation processes intended to identify and mitigate threats posed by violent extremists, including the ongoing transition to recurrent vetting and the integration of rigorous checks of open source information and social media.